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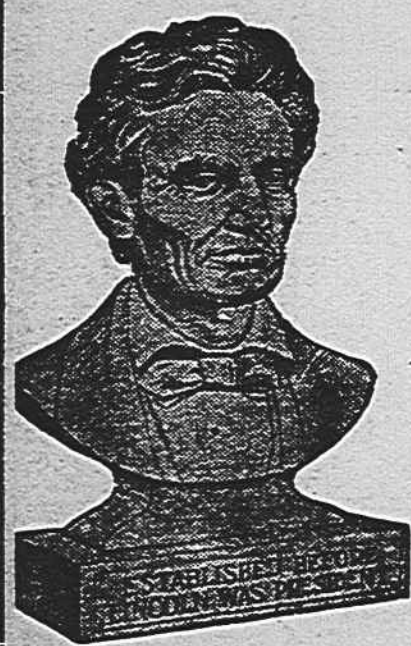
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## AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL ART

By Frederic J. Haskin.

The United States is just now being awakened to a realization of the dependence of many lines of industry on art. The effectiveness of the gown a woman wears, of the furniture that fills her house, the china upon her table, rests largely upon the artistic ability that was the basis of its creation. A piece of clay may have been worth a penny. Shaped with a certain degree of skill into a dish it took on a value of twenty-five cents. In the hands of a better artist it may have become a vase worth five dollars. With the design of the master back of it and the skill of the well-trained workmen in its execution, it may have taken on a value a hundred times as great. The increase in value has, in each case, depended upon art. It has demonstrated the dollars and cents value of art as a basis for certain industries.

It is true of the United States that in certain of the industries that require the greatest amount of artistic appreciation combined with mechanical skill, it has leaned heavily upon the older countries of Europe. The making of pottery, for instance, requires a rare combination of art and skill. The designer must be an artist, and more. He must know all the processes of pottery manufacture that he may judge the possibilities in his design. He and the skilled potter must supplement each other. The making of pottery, for instance, requires a rare combination of art and skill. The designer must be an artist, and more. He must know all the processes of pottery manufacture that he may judge the possibilities in his design. He and the skilled potter must supplement each other. The making of pottery, for instance, requires a rare combination of art and skill. The designer must be an artist, and more. He must know all the processes of pottery manufacture that he may judge the possibilities in his design. He and the skilled potter must supplement each other.

Along the border of Germany and France, in the region now devastated by war, have dwelt a people many of whom have been makers of pottery for centuries. The art and craft of it have been handed down from one generation to another. There is a complete understanding between designer and workman. The result is a very superior product which it is difficult for the same industry in a new country to equal. Similar conditions exist in many other industries.

In the face of this situation American manufacturers have quite generally depended on Europe, particularly for their designs. The value of textiles depends materially upon the artistic merits of their patterns. American textile manufacturers have, instead of making their own designs, sent men abroad to select from those that might be purchased from European industrial artists. The opportunity to get satisfactory results in this way has interfered with the development of competent designers in America. It is still claimed that the American designer, while he may be artistically competent, does not know enough of the mechanical end of manufacture to make himself effective.

The present condition of chaos in Europe has interfered with the activities of its industrial artists. America is being thrown on its own resources. While the situation exists, the American Federation of Art is making the most of it to emphasize the need of a greater development of industrial art training and at the same time to show that work while work is already being done independently in America. The annual convention of this association held in May was largely given over to a discussion of industrial art. As a result of the activity of the American Federation of Art, an imposing exhibition of the products of American firms has been placed on display at the National Museum in Washington.

As a result of the discussion that has been called forth by the industrial art situation, it is interesting to note that figures have been compiled which show the relative attention that is given to industrial art and academic art respectively in this country, and the relative results that are derived from each. It is shown that there are 109 schools of academic art in the United States, with an enrollment of more than 6,000 pupils, the object of which is to train them to be painters, sculptors and illustrators. From figures furnished by the directors of those schools it was estimated that not more than one per cent of these students followed are as a profession after leaving school.

There are a very few industrial art schools in the United States, the biggest of all these being located in Philadelphia. Figures from this school show that seventy-five per cent of its graduates during the last ten years have found lucrative employment along the lines of their training. There is one night school in the United States that teaches industrial art, and this is the only public school that has such a course.

In the public schools of Europe a vast amount of attention is given to industrial art training. France has long had her industrial art schools and they are to be found in every town. They are as common as are high schools in America. It is held that the precedence that France has gained in the production of materials that were useful, and at the same time artistic, has been largely due to her public industrial art schools. It was in 1899, at the great exposition at Paris, that Germany found herself embarrassed by the artistic superiority of the products of France. With characteristic thoroughness, Germany immediately subsidized her best artists, established schools, and was soon teaching industrial art to all people. At a subsequent exposition ten years later she showed products that were close rivals to those of France. This latter country, that its

products might not be confused with those of its rival insisted that the label, "made in Germany," be attached to all exhibits of the latter. Thus did France give Germany a by-word the world over.

The industrial art exhibition that is being shown at the National Museum develops the fact that America has some factory products of which she may well feel proud. There are the tapestries, for instance. The weaving of tapestries is an art that has changed little from the days of ancient Egypt. The same hand looms are used that played their part in those distant days. Albert Herter, well known as a painter and mural decorator, is largely responsible for the revival of tapestry weaving in America. That industry, centering around New York city, is producing materials as good as are made anywhere in the world.

In work in ornamental iron the United States takes the lead. In door plates, gratings, andirons, lamp posts, ornamental fences, the products of the American mills are most admirable. The development of artistic iron work was at its height in the days of the Renaissance, and was then used most effectively. The old masterpieces are reproduced nowadays, and new designs fitted to modern uses have been developed. Most impressive specimens of art objects in iron are shown at the exhibition in Washington.

Cut glass is peculiarly an American art. Europeans do not go in for cut glass. As it is an article that has been originated in America and finds its chief market here, so has its manufacture been chiefly limited to this side of the ocean. This leaves the artist-artisan in this peculiar industry practically without a rival.

The manufacturers of pottery and china has been developed to its most effective showing in France and England. Yet there is a great deal of it turned out in America. There are mills in New Orleans and Connecticut; in Colorado and New Jersey; yet Ohio produces most of it. One of the great English manufacturers recently stated that Europeans had no cause to fear the American producers with the exception of a single plant which he mentioned and which, he said, made as good pottery as anybody in the world.

It is claimed of the American householder that he has within him a desire to furnish his establishment in accordance with artistic taste. It is impossible that the average man should know the detail of how to accomplish this end. For a single living room, there is the matter of tables, chairs, rugs, curtains, wall hangings, sculpture, pictures, are objects. He must have advice as to details and as to the harmony of the whole. It is no mean task to execute a single room properly.

A committee of the American Federation of Arts determined to furnish a model room with the products of American factories as a part of the exhibition at the national museum. It called upon the manufacturers to contribute the different details. The furniture came from a certain group of manufacturers, the drapery silks were woven by the mills that were considered to take the lead in that line, the rugs of Persian design were from another source, 'fabrile' glass vases appear in colorful effects on the tall mantle. The color scheme of the room is in brown and tans. The pictures on the walls are by American painters and the screens are embroidered by American women. Lamp shades are of parchment, shedding a mellow glow through the pig skin. To him who wants a living room for an ambitious establishment here is a model that it might be wise to copy. The best authorities consider it the correct setting forth of what such an apartment in an American home should be.

It is claimed that the present situation should prove to be of ultimate great benefit to America. The fact that the United States has not developed industrial art independence is not attributed to lack of artistic sense, but to the fact that what was needed might be easily obtained in Europe. With the source of designs removed, it is expected that the possibility of its competent creation in America will soon be forthcoming.

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